

PHILOSOPHY

THE SYSTEM ITSELF IS UNTENABLE

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The review system is broken – not only by the sheer number of “me too” papers but also by the lack of reviewers who are willing to spend their time on these papers. This is also the result of a new [essay](#)

Many scientists are increasingly frustrated with journals — Nature among them — that benefit from the unpaid work of reviewing while charging high fees to publish in them or read their content. A spokesperson for Springer Nature says: “We’re always looking to find new and better ways of recognizing peer reviewers for their valuable and essential work.” They also pointed to a 2017 survey of more than 1,200 Nature reviewers, in which 87% of respondents said they considered reviewing to be their academic duty.

Springer/Nature is not looking into better ways of recognizing peer review, they just keep the money that they are making with the free service of scientists. The essay reports that [cash payments would solve the problem](#) but quote “others” saying such a system would be unethical and unsustainable. There are no “others”, it is their own opinion. The current system is unethical and unsustainable just by securing the incredible [financial gain from sucking out science](#).

STM estimates that the journal market is worth about \$10 billion. Assuming that 55% of Elsevier’s 2017 revenues came from journals, that translates into £1.363 billion which – at the average exchange rate for the year – equals \$1.756 billion (a 17.5% market share). ... Elsevier, however, attracts a disproportionate amount of attention within the academic community because of its profitability and its business practices. Elsevier operates at a 37% reported operating profit margin compared to Springer Nature which operates at a 23% margin. Elsevier has often pursued tone-deaf business practices, which have been viewed as a land grab by the academic community.

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